

STATE OF MAINE

—
**IN THE YEAR OF OUR LORD
TWO THOUSAND NINETEEN**
—

**JOINT RESOLUTION COMMEMORATING THE RATIFICATION
OF THE 19TH AMENDMENT TO THE UNITED STATES
CONSTITUTION PROVIDING FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE**

WHEREAS, at the time of the country's and the State of Maine's founding, women were not recognized as citizens and were unable to vote;

WHEREAS, on July 19-20, 1848, the first national women's rights convention, including a call for women's suffrage, was held in Seneca Falls, New York;

WHEREAS, on January 29, 1873, the first Maine Woman Suffrage Association meeting was held;

WHEREAS, on September 23-24, 1885, the first statewide suffrage convention in Maine was held at the Methodist Episcopal Church on Chestnut Street in Portland;

WHEREAS, from 1886 to 1915, several bills in support of suffrage were submitted to the all-male Maine Legislature and all were defeated;

WHEREAS, on September 10, 1917, a statewide referendum on the suffrage issue in Maine was defeated by a 2-to-1 margin of voters, all male;

WHEREAS, in June 1919, the United States Congress passed and submitted to the states for ratification the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution, which prohibited the Federal Government and the States from denying the right to vote to United States citizens on the basis of sex;

WHEREAS, on November 6, 1919, during an emergency legislative session, Maine became the 19th state to ratify the 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution;

WHEREAS, on August 18, 1920, the proposed 19th Amendment to the United States Constitution achieved the ratification by 3/4 of the states necessary for women's suffrage to become law;

WHEREAS, in 1923, the first woman was elected to the Maine House of Representatives; in 1926, the first woman was elected to the Maine Senate; in 1940, the first woman was elected to represent Maine in the United States House of Representatives; in 1948, the first woman was elected to represent Maine in the United States Senate; in 1996, the first woman was elected Speaker of the Maine House of Representatives; in 2003, the first woman was elected President of the Maine Senate; in 2009, the first woman was elected Attorney General of Maine; and, in 2018, the first woman was elected Governor of Maine;

WHEREAS, the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Legislature of the State of Maine now includes 71 women Legislators, the largest number in Maine history;

WHEREAS, the Maine Suffrage Centennial Collaborative is committed to commemorating the centennial without repeating the discriminatory and exclusionary aspects of the original suffrage movement and encourages all Maine people to participate in numerous events to celebrate the centennial all over the State, including an exhibit in the Maine State Museum that opens to the public on March 23, 2019; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED: That We, the Members of the One Hundred and Twenty-ninth Legislature now assembled in the First Regular Session, on behalf of the people we represent, recognize the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage and the opportunity it offers to encourage civic engagement and voting today; and be it further

RESOLVED: That We hereby honor the suffragists who struggled for decades to fulfill the promise that all Americans are equal under the law and urge everyone to recommit themselves to ensuring that all Maine citizens have their voices heard through the election process; and be it further

RESOLVED: That suitable copies of this Joint Resolution, duly authenticated by the Secretary of State, be transmitted to the Maine Suffrage Centennial Collaborative.